

**UNITED NATIONS COMMISSION ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
FOR DEVELOPMENT (CSTD), twenty-fifth session
Geneva, 28 March - 1 April 2022**

**Science, technology and innovation for sustainable urban development in a
post-pandemic world**

Statement submitted by

Ms. Maimunah Mohd Sharif
Executive Director
UN-Habitat

DISCLAIMER: The views presented here are the contributors' and do not necessarily reflect the views and position of the United Nations or the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development.

Video Remarks

(UN-Habitat Focal Point:
Melissa Permezel and Naomi
Hoogervorst)

**UNCTAD Request
Sustainable development in a
post-COVID world**

30/03/2022
Virtual Event
2.30 to 4.30 p.m. (CET)

- **Excellencies**
- **Honourable guests**
- **Distinguished delegates**
- **Colleagues, friends, ladies and gentlemen**

Before I begin, please allow me to reiterate the Secretary-General's call for an immediate cessation of hostilities and the return to normalcy in the territory of Ukraine. Civilians always pay the highest price and the UN is increasing our humanitarian support to the people of Ukraine. To the mayors and community leaders on the frontline, my admiration for your courage and leadership during this difficult time.

Thank you for the opportunity to present UN-Habitat's perspective today. I have no doubt about the ongoing role of science, technology and innovation as a fundamental force in transforming development to deliver sustainable, inclusive and just human settlements around the globe. Throughout history, urban areas have been homes of various technological breakthroughs. Cities have also been major beneficiaries of a wide array of rapidly evolving technologies. At the same time, we need to understand how the vulnerable and marginalized in cities are faring in this transformative digital age. For me there is a new urgency to use creativity, new ideas and partnerships to solve ongoing pressing and complex urban challenges.

At UN-Habitat, our public space programme has been harnessing virtual reality and gaming technologies, through dynamic partnerships with tech companies and local communities.

The first United Nations Innovation Accelerator (UNITAC), developed in partnership with the city of Hamburg, Hafen University and UNOICT, is pioneering technologies, and applied research methods to develop innovative solutions to achieve SDG 11 and other related SDGs. In addition, our Future Cities Programme, supports local authorities using innovative digital tools for localizing and assessing the SDGs.

As all colleagues gathered here at UNCTAD reflect on how science, technology and innovation can promote sustainable development, at UN-Habitat we would recommend the following:

- **Use cities to localize Digital Cooperation:** We must recognize the role that cities play as places where digital challenges are experienced but also opportunities leveraged.
- **Invest in digital assets and infrastructure:** we must invest heavily in cities in adequate electricity infrastructure, renewable energy, mobility solutions and efficiency of buildings, including housing, to reduce carbon emissions and facilitate the ecological transition
- **Develop clear evidence-based policies and plans on digital assets and digital inclusion.** It is critical to adopt people-centered planning and smart cities approaches based on data. It is also essential to improve public open-data repositories and promote digital literacy to improve citizen engagement.

Let me end by inviting all of you to the Eleventh Session of the World Urban Forum which will take place in Katowice, Poland from 26 to 30 June 2022. This will be an opportunity to discuss about technology and innovation that are grappling with the localization of the SDG’s and the implementation of the New Urban Agenda.

Thank you.

Prepared by	Edited by	Status	Version	Word Count	Estimated Time (125 words/min)
Melissa Permezel and Naomi Hoogervorst	Charlotte Albin Neil; Runze	Finalized	Sun 27 Feb 16:10	450 (including note on Ukraine)	4 Minutes

Scenario

Given the close connections between the theme of this panel and the work of UN- Habitat, your participation in this discussion would be highly valuable to articulate the policy position of your organization on the role of science, technology and innovation in promoting urban development in the context of SDG 11.

As the CSTD is a United Nations-wide Commission, the participation of all United Nations entities, including its specialized agencies, is strongly encouraged to accumulate various perspectives for a rich discussion on how science and technology can be steered to contribute to achieve the SDGs.